LITHUANIA MOURNS SINGER'S DEATH

VILNIUS, Aug 10, (AP) Lithuania, whose Olympic basketball team once wore tie-dye T-shirts donated by the Grateful Dead, expressed condolences Thursday on the death of the band's lead singer, Jerry Garcia.

Lithuania, a European basketball powerhouse, beat Russia to win a bronze medal in the 1992 Summer Olympics. The team gained fame by donning its psychedelic, multi-colored tie-dyes at the awards ceremony. The prime minister's office said Lithuanians were saddened by the death of Jerry Garcia, 53, who led the legendary band for over three decades. He died of a heart attack on Wednesday.

"We were thankful to him and the Grateful Dead," chief government spokesman Vilius Kavaliauskas, said in a phone interview. "They were sponsors of ours at a peak in our nation's sports life," said Kavaliauskas. ``We were very proud to have such a famous band as a sponsor."

The Grateful Dead have always had a small circle of fans in this former Soviet Baltic republic, but the band became more widely known after backing the country's basketball team.